

# THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



WELL, TO BE SURE!

## THE LOST BANK NOTE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DANESBURY HOUSE."

CHAPTER VI.—THE CLOUD.

MARIA WEST grew pretty strong again. It was Mrs. West's pleasure to allow her to remain at the "Glebe Farm," for she did not well know how the house would get on without her; and indeed there was no other home open to her. She pursued her various occupations with outward quietness, but not with inward peace; for as the days and weeks went on, and nothing further arose, a feeling grew upon Maria that she should never

be cleared. Slighting words and scornful looks were cast towards her; the neighbours turned their heads as she passed, and visitors treated her with cool silence. Maria would go into her own room and sit there, away from all; she strove to find comfort in studying the many instances, somewhat similar to her own case, recorded in the Bible, where God had suffered his people to be afflicted for a time; and though despondency occasionally got the dominion over her, yet there were hours when her heart positively glowed within her at the perfect trust she felt in God. She read and re-read the history of Joseph; how, for long, he was an exile,

shut up in prison, seemingly abandoned and forsaken. And yet, God was with him there—was himself ordering these very troubles, in his own wondrous way, only to bring him to a triumphant end, conducing to his exaltation and happiness, and to the good of others at large. Were the dark days of his tribulation remembered by Joseph in his prosperity? Ay, doubtless they were, and regarded as a boon granted him. Whatsoever may be God's dealings, they are full of goodness, of wisdom, of mercy; and to those who patiently wait his time for the proof, never doubting, they will be found so. Maria dwelt on the history of Job. Was any man afflicted like unto him? But he did not lose his trust in God. He had patience; and he was brought through his afflictions, and his captivity turned.

Nothing seemed so practically to lift Maria out of her cares as the conversation with the Reverend Mr. Lister. That gentleman, though he was as much at a loss as any one to explain where the money could be, or who was the true delinquent, had now full and perfect confidence that it was not Maria, and he cheered her onward on her sad and difficult path, as few can cheer, save an earnest, right-minded Christian minister. One thing she never would have had courage to do, but for Mr. Lister, and that was, make her appearance at church. Every eye in the building, to Maria's imagination, would be cast on her with haughty scorn, and her cheeks burnt and her heart beat at the bare thought of it. Mr. Lister quietly argued with her. "It is a duty you owe to God," he said, "and you must not shrink from it; encounter it for his sake. It may be months, years, before the true facts of this mystery come to light; would you absent yourself all that while from public worship?"

"If I wait a little time I may be able to attempt it with greater courage," she faltered, "to stand the ordeal better."

"I think not," he answered. "My opinion is, that the further you put it off, the greater would be your dread of it."

"Oh, Mr. Lister! how shall I bear up, in the full sight of the world's scorn?"

"By looking to Him who for us bore the cross and the shame," he meekly answered. "A grievous cross, as you feel it, is now laid upon you; strive to imitate him, his patience, his endurance; bear it bravely, in remembrance of him, and you cannot think how that will lessen the burden of it to you."

The words spoke comfort to her, and gave her a courage that perhaps no other argument could have done. She did not blame people for assuming her guilt, for she knew how greatly appearances told against her.

When Sunday came, Maria went to church with the family. Once in the high old-fashioned pew, she was shut in from the dreaded gaze, and she was enabled to give herself entirely up to the services. She found a comfort in them wholly new. Never is the heart so open to heavenly messages as in the seasons of tribulation and affliction.

Mr. West hastened out of the church at the conclusion, to join a farmer whom he wanted to see; but Mrs. West remained till every one else had left it: it was her custom. When they reached the churchyard it was full of lingerers, and Mrs. West and Frances Chambers walked on, greeting their acquaintances, and leaving Maria behind and alone. Her face white from its recent illness, became dyed as with hectic, for all around were gazing at her—the thief! She staggered up the path, wondering if she should fall, wishing she might catch hold of a tombstone for support, or sit down upon a grassy mound and hide her face, thinking how hard her lot was; none

had compassion on her—her uncle had forgotten her—her aunt and Frances Chambers were ashamed of her—her chest was heaving, her breath was short. "It is the cross laid upon me," she murmured. "Lord, do thou be with me, for none else will." But ere the words were well spoken her arm was taken and placed within a firm support.

She supposed it was her uncle; she felt a strange revulsion of feeling of thankfulness towards him; she looked up, and saw it was Mr. Lister.

"I perceive you are not very strong yet, Miss West; you will be the better for my arm."

The tears of gratitude welled up to her eyes. "Strong neither in body nor in spirit," she answered.

"You will be stronger in both, by-and-by," he cheerfully said; and he led her through the crowd, nodding to one, speaking a pleasant word to another, and then they walked on in silence. Maria felt unequal to break it, and Mr. Lister did not. At the gate of the "Glebe Farm" Mrs. West and Miss Chambers turned and saw who was bringing Maria. Maria, even at the distance, and through her crape veil, perceived their gesture of surprise.

"How shall I thank you?" she impulsively cried to her companion.

"Thank me for what?"

"Oh, you know, you know, Mr. Lister. All shunned me: even my aunt and uncle would not be seen to walk with me; but you have braved the opinion of the world, and done an act of kindness. I shall remember it to the last day of my life."

"Truly a little matter," he replied, as they joined Mrs. West, who had waited at the gate. "Are you strong enough to proceed alone through the garden?" he inquired, as he declined Mrs. West's invitation to enter.

"Oh yes, thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Lister."

He released her, shook hands, and departed.

"What a strange man he must be!" exclaimed Frances, who could not recover her astonishment. A clergyman walking with one lying under the ban of suspicion was an inexplicable mystery. "He must have been taken with a fit of chivalry," she added, unable to suppress the sarcasm of her tone.

The curate, as he returned, encountered Mr. West, and the latter stopped him. "It is very good of you to befriend my niece," he began; "but may you not be rendering her more harm than good? So long as she can find anybody to uphold her, especially one in your position, she will persist in her obstinacy, and refuse to confess."

"I still adhere to my opinion, that she is innocent," remarked Mr. Lister.

"But my dear sir, how can you so fly in the face of common sense? If Maria did not take the money, where did she get the ten pounds from? She took it, and she has got the rest of it laid by snug till the hubbub's over."

"Let it be as it may, she should be treated with compassion. To leave her to come through the churchyard alone, weak with her long illness, and shrinking from the gazers, was really not humane. But for my arm I believe she would have fallen. Harsh measures never brought a sinner to repentance yet, while kindness has won over thousands. But Mr. West, suppose it should turn out by-and-by that your niece was innocent, not guilty? How you will reproach yourself for every not and word of unnecessary harshness!"

"It is supposing nonsense, Mr. Lister. If there were but a loop-hole of chance, who so pleased to find it as

I? for she is my own brother's child. As long as she refuses to confess, and to give up the rest of the money, she must be treated with marked displeasure and coldness. Let her do that, and I'll forgive her."

In the course of the following week, Mrs. West directed Maria, in the cold distant tone now invariably accorded her, to have the blue-room prepared for sleeping in.

"For a visitor, aunt?" she inquired.

"Yes," was the curt reply. "Mr. Letsom is coming."

A thrill, half pleasure, half apprehension, ran through Maria. She knew that Alfred Letsom had been to the "Glebe Farm" when she was too ill to see him, but he had not been since. She knew also, he had then been informed of the transaction, and her guilt assumed to him. As soon as she was able, she wrote to him a plain statement of the facts, as she had told them to her uncle and to Mr. Lister, assuring him of her innocence. To this letter she had received no reply, and it pained her much. But she could not conceal from herself that he had become cool in manner to her previously; he had paid visits to the "Glebe Farm" in the winter, ostensibly for the purpose of seeing Maria, though, when there, appearing more occupied with Frances Chambers.

He arrived on the Saturday, earlier than was anticipated, and no one was at home but Maria. He started when he saw her; held out his hand, drew it back, and finally held it out again, all in indecision. "How ill you must have been!" he involuntarily uttered; "I never saw any one so changed."

"Extremely ill," she quietly answered. "I told you so in my letter, Alfred."

"Ah—yes. Where's Mrs. West?"

"She and Frances are out in the pony carriage. Alfred, why did you not reply to my letter?"

He knitted his brow, paused, relaxed it again, and then threw his head back with the air of a man who has been nerving himself to some disagreeable duty. Maria spoke before he could.

"Alfred, I am innocent as you. I know no more where that money of my aunt's went to than you do. Can you believe otherwise?"

"I could not have believed it; but it is unfortunate that the circumstances are so unaccountable."

The tone struck upon her heart like a heavy nightmare, and she felt that all, between her and Alfred Letsom, was soon to have an ending. An indignant thought flashed through her.

"You do not believe me guilty, Alfred; no, you do not," speaking energetically in her emotion; "you have not known me all my life to believe me guilty now. You wish to cancel the engagement between us, and you seize upon this plea to do so: it had been more gracious, far more kind, that you had candidly told me your mind was changed."

"I declare I don't think you know what you are saying," he uttered, his face glowing with confusion; for Maria had hit upon the truth, and cowards do not care to hear it spoken to them when it tells home. "I cannot be expected to fulfil my engagement to you, until this suspicious matter shall have been cleared up—if it ever can be cleared."

"You no longer wished it some time before this took place. Did you think I was unobservant of your coolness last winter? Stay a moment, Alfred; I have said my say so far, and am not going on to complain. You will be surprised to hear that I also thought of parting."

"Indeed!" he slightly said.

She drew her chair nearer to him. "Alfred, I have cause to believe that you are falling into habits that cannot profit you; they may be your ruin here, they

certainly will not help your hopes of a hereafter. Is it true, or is it not, that you have become fond of gambling?"

Alfred Letsom's eyes flashed fire. "What do you mean?" he burst forth.

"Alfred, I have no right now to find fault with you; but I would still speak to you as a friend. I know that you have been led away to frequent places of an evening where gambling is carried on: be wise in time, and eschew it for your own sake. Ever since I heard this of you, I have been schooling myself to bear the parting between us that I thought must come. Did you take George to these places?"

"No," he angrily replied. "Who dares to say I did?"

"No one has said so to me. But I learnt that you and George were both seen there at the same time. George was but a boy compared to you, and it was your duty to set him a better example—to have urged him away. Had you done so, this unhappy suspicion would never have fallen upon me."

"Oh, I see," cried Alfred Letsom slowly; "then you did get the hundred pounds, and sent it to George to pay his debts with."

Maria's colour rose indignantly. "I am ashamed of you, Alfred. Even to save George from far worse than debt, would I commit a theft? I sent George the ten pounds, and no more."

"There is no necessity to prolong the discussion," returned Mr. Letsom; "if George has gone wrong, it is no affair of mine."

"Had you made it your affair in the onset, it might have saved him a deal of embarrassment and suffering, and others also," she rejoined. "At one time you would have done it. I am sorry you are so greatly altered."

"The alteration may not strike every one as it does you; they may see it in a different light," was his supercilious reply, and Maria's cheek burnt once again. They rose to part.

"I forgive you for the injurious suspicions you have cast to me; I know you do not really feel them, and I forgive you for all else. From henceforth we meet as—"

"Strangers?" he put in, for she had momentarily stopped.

"I was about to say as friends; for the present, perhaps, I should substitute 'acquaintances.' When this soreness, which we probably both feel, shall have subsided, we may become friends again: nothing more," she pointedly added; "but life is not so long, or friends so plentiful, that we can afford to give up those of years."

It scarcely surprised Maria, and it certainly did not pain her as it would formerly have done, to hear, on the very next day, that Mr. Letsom was to marry Miss Chambers. She had an idea that his implied engagement to herself had alone prevented its being entered into before. Her uncle spoke to her about it as soon as it came to his ears, and his tone was more cordial than it had been since the spring.

"This is shuffling and changing," cried he. "What do you say to it, Maria?"

"I can only hope, uncle, that it will be for the best."

"Did he give you up?"

"Something of that sort may be said on both sides," she answered. "He has wished to do so some time, as I believe; and I, on my part, had begun to think it might be well so to do, for I heard something to his disparagement that made me uneasy."

"What was it? Anything serious?"



"I do not consider it would be quite fair to repeat it, uncle. Mr. Letsom is certainly old enough to take care of his conduct; and my motive might be misjudged."

"True. How is it that he has made all this money?" pursued Mr. West.

"I did not know he had made any," she replied, looking up. "He has four hundred a year salary now, and it will rise to more."

"He has made some thousands of pounds, he tells me, by speculating."

"Speculating in what?" asked Maria, a curious doubt stealing over her.

"In consols, he said. Frances is in high feather over it—thinks she is going to ride in her carriage."

But if it had not greatly pained Maria to hear of the new engagement, a keen and bitter pain fell upon her when its ostensible cause was given out in the house and its vicinity—"Mr. Letsom had transferred his affections to Miss Chambers, for he could not make one his wife who might steal his money from him." The gossip reached Maria's ears, and she took refuge in solitude. Very dark indeed did her sorrows seem to be in that hour, very heavy was her cross. "How long, how long am I to bear this humiliation?" she breathed, almost in a murmuring tone; "how long is this cloud to rest upon me?"

Poor troubled spirit! is it so dark that you cannot realize the gracious promise—*All things work together for good to them that love God?* Have you so soon forgotten the imprisoned days of Joseph, the long affliction of Job? Your trials are not great as theirs were, but they bore up, believing that light would surely arise out of darkness. The longest night will have an end, the keenest suffering will find its alleviation. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

## A NIGHT AT HERRING-DRIVING.

### CHAPTER I.

"How I should like it!" said I.

"Very good; there is nothing easier," said Harry Morton.

We were strolling on the beach at Sunderland one fine summer's evening. The sea was just rough enough to give life and vigour to the scene, and the sun was casting its parting beams on a little fleet of fishing-boats which had put off that afternoon, and were preparing for action. It was at the commencement of the herring season.

Harry Morton is an old salt. He had been expatiating at some length on the manifold pleasures of his former experiences as a sailor, and, among other things, hinting at the enjoyments of a night at "herring-driving."

"There is nothing easier," said he, when, warmed by his conversation, I had rather incautiously avowed that I should "like it."

"The fact is," continued he, "I am going off to-morrow evening with—, ha! here is the man himself; allow me to introduce you."

The introduction was to Peter Tweedie, part owner and whole master of the "Mary Jane" fishing-coble, who honoured me with a broad stare when he was told of my hastily expressed wish.

"Every man to his taste," said Peter Tweedie; "and if that's yours, sir, I am not the man to baulk it; but—"

"No buts, friend Tweedie," interposed Harry; "only tell us when you shall put off."

"At three o'clock, afternoon," said the man, "if you really mean it, gentlemen."

"Mean it! to be sure we do."

"I won't warrant this weather to last six-and-thirty hours, nor four-and-twenty either," continued Peter, glancing upwards and around.

"We shall not be very particular," said Harry.

"I don't suppose you will; but your friend, perhaps, mayn't be used to squalls."

"My friend is not particular either," rejoined Harry; "we will be with you, never fear." And so the matter was settled.

"Be sure you are ready in time," was Harry's parting admonition to me; "I shall call for you a little before three. Put on your oldest clothes, and a pair of strong boots; look out an old great-coat—you will need it; and for your share of the commissariat department, be provided with a loaf, a pound or two of steaks, and a dust of tea. If you add to this a pint bottle of rum, the fishermen will think none the worse of you. Medical stores are sometimes useful on a voyage, you know," he added with an expressive twinkle of the eye.

The next afternoon found me prepared—old clothes, strong boots, pilot-coat (a borrowed one), loaf, steaks, tea, and medical stores. Punctual to his engagement, Harry was at my lodgings, and together we wended our way to the docks.

Arrived at the place of embarkation, we found our boatmen making active preparations for the trip. Peter Tweedie's ominous hints about the weather had proved so far correct that few other boats besides the "Mary Jane" showed any signs of leaving harbour; and I overheard more than one fisherman croaking about "a nasty neet," and that "they" (Peter Tweedie and company) "ought to think sham o' theirselves to gan oot." We were in for it, however, and, jumping into the boat, I was quickly followed by Harry, who clapped me on the shoulder, with—

"Now, old fellow, I have you fast. I kept a sharp eye on you on shore, for fear of your making a run of it."

We were delayed a few minutes longer, as one of our men had to be despatched for some fuel; but he soon returned with a large basket of coals slung over his shoulder. This having been taken on board, we pushed off; and I set about making myself as comfortable as I could, in spite of a heavy rain which began to fall at the time of starting. Thanks to Peter Tweedie, who lost no time in investing me in an oilskin overall (with a fishy smell), I was impervious to the shower, and had leisure enough to glance around on our craft and crew.

The "Mary Jane" is a fine specimen of the pride of the north coast, the coble—a fishing-boat of peculiar construction. The famous "America," which caused such consternation to our yacht clubs some time back, was in many respects built on the model of a coble. A true coble, however, has no keel; but the rudder dips to some depth below her bottom, as does the bow, so that a line drawn from the lower part of the one to that of the other, would represent the position of the keel, if there were one. A coble is rigged with a large lug-sail and a jib, and, in the hands of those accustomed to her management, is considered one of the finest sea-boats afloat. She will live in almost any weather, and will sail closer to the wind than any other craft; while for speed she can scarcely be surpassed.

Our coble was about thirty-three feet from stem to stern, and was decked forward, thus forming a snug little fore-castle, which was furnished with a small stove, and such appliances for comfort as were compatible with

economy of space. The after part of the boat was occupied by a huge heap of nets, concerning which, more presently. She carried an unusually tall mast, and a proportionably large sail.

Our crew consisted of only three men—the owner, Peter Tweedie, and two others—Tom Bilson and Joe Cutbush. Peter, as I have said, acted as master or captain; and while there was necessarily a degree of familiarity subsisting between himself and his men, with whom he had shared many dangers, the captain still maintained a demeanour which showed him to be fully conscious of his position. Fine fellows they were, all three of them—hardy, weather-beaten, tough, and well-seasoned, whose true character and natural instincts were better developed on their adopted element than when sauntering along shore.

Well, we crept slowly out of dock, Harry Morton at the helm, and were steered by him through the south entrance into the open sea, which was sufficiently rough to produce some curious sensations in a landsman which it is unnecessary to describe. As to the coble, she seemed to bound forward as though glad to be released from a state of inactivity, and rejoicing in her deliverance from the smooth water of the dock.

From the peculiar construction of these boats, they can safely lay over in a way which, to almost any other craft, would be fraught with peril. Indeed, they sail better in this position than in any other. Many of my readers probably know what it is to be in a boat under sail in a stiff breeze; but until they have been in a coble, under the same circumstances, they have something yet to learn. As far as the "Mary Jane" was concerned, her gunwale, on one side, not only appeared to be, but was, below the surface of the sea, which, to my inexperienced eyes, threatened every moment to rush in and swamp the boat. In reality, however, there was no danger, perhaps scarcely a possibility of this catastrophe, the great speed of the coble, and the peculiar construction of her sides, acting in such a manner on the water as to throw it back from the depressed gunwale in a continuous stream.

Thus, the instant our coble felt the breeze, she laid over on her side, and began to show of what she was capable. From that moment, too, our men seemed new beings, and as the boat gathered fresh way, they hauled at the sheets with a will, until every stitch of canvas was strained and the tall mast bowed to the waves as though it had nothing further to do with the perpendicular.

"There she gans" (goes), said our skipper, with a grunt of inward gratulation, as he at length quietly seated himself on the nets by my side; and forthwith he began to launch out in praise of his coble. To him she was evidently the perfection of beauty, and he detailed, with a pardonable degree of pride, her various sailing exploits; how she had outstripped all competitors in a race; how, the year before, she was off in the great gale, when so many vessels went down, and how gallantly she had behaved; and how she had often had a good run when few other boats had ventured from shore. All this, and more. Even as a lover descants on the beauties of his mistress—a horse-jockey on the points of his favourite racer—a schoolboy on the merits of his bat, "the best bat in the school"—so did Peter Tweedie dwell upon the excellencies of his coble.

By this time we were about three miles from shore, and the weather was gradually freshening, though not to make any perceptible difference to our rate of progress, and with no indications of any sudden change. So, at least, I should have said; but our skipper was wider awake than I. While he was talking about his

boat, his eyes had been fixed to windward, and all at once, breaking off from the topic of conversation, he rose to his feet with the cry, "Here she comes!" and in less time than it takes to write it down, the men had sprung to the ropes, the great sail was stowed, and we were riding under a bare pole, save that the jib was still flying, to keep the craft steady.

This manoeuvre was not executed either too soon or too rapidly; for in another moment we were in the thick of a fearful hurricane, which, after laying us on our beam ends, whirled and drove us on with inconceivable rapidity; and I could but admire the coolness of the small crew, and the calm confident reliance they placed on their ability to meet every emergency which might arise.

Happily, the squall passed away as suddenly as it came upon us; and when it cleared, we observed that two or three cobbles which had ventured to follow the "Mary Jane," though at a respectful distance, had all turned back and were making for the shelter of the harbour.

Upon this, our skipper held short conference with his men, as to the propriety of turning back too. The season, as I have said, was only just commencing, and the fish were not yet so plentiful as to promise a remunerative take. However, while they were discussing the matter, Morton had put the boat's head seaward, and Bilson sang out, "She want's to gan."

"Gan it is, then," said Peter Tweedie; and there was no more thought of going home till morning. In a few minutes our lug-sail was re-set, and we were stretching away northward, in which direction our fisherman expected to fall in with some herrings. The weather now began to moderate, the rain ceased to fall, and, contrary to my expectation at least, there was some promise of a fine night.

As the time or the place for casting net was not yet, we gathered together in a group—our steersman having, I suppose, lashed the helm—and, wishing success to the expedition, also lighting our pipes, we fell to spinning long yarns—I mean those of us who had any materials for that nautical process.

Harry was as much at home in this as in steering; and possessed, as well, by the spirit of humour, he commenced—

"Did I ever tell you of my adventure in Devonshire, B.?" addressing me.

"No, I don't remember you having done so."

"I'll tell you now, then. You are aware that Devonshire is notorious for its narrow lanes?"

"Yes, narrow and long, and crooked and steep-banked, and high-hedged and muddy—so I have been told; and there is a song about matrimony being like a Devonshire lane."

"Never mind about matrimony: my story has nothing to do with that happy state. But perhaps you don't care to hear it?" said Harry, looking around him and fixing his eyes particularly on the two sailors.

"Oh, gan on w't, sir," said Cutbush, as he puffed away at his black cutty pipe.

"Well, then, as you wish it, here goes. The last time I was in Devonshire I had occasion to travel a few miles, and started off in a four-wheeler. My horse was skittish, and may be I wasn't so good a hand at steering a craft like that as I am a coble."

"Stan's to reason," said Peter Tweedie; "a man can't do everything."

"However," continued Harry, "I got on famously all the while I was on the turnpike road, and what with tacking about, managed to give a wide berth to every-

thing I hailed. But presently I had to turn short into a Devonshire lane, narrow and long, and crooked and high-banked, and muddy, as my friend B. says. What do you think happened then?"

"Met with squalls, may-hap," ejaculated Tom Bilson.

"Squalls! ahem! You wan't far out, Tom. Squalls and squeaks too; for when I had made some way, and was got just to the narrowest part of the channel, I looked ahead——"

"Breakers?" cried Joe Cutbush.

"Worse. If there was one there was a couple of hundred, with a man behind, driving them on like mad."

"Driving what on, sir?" demanded Tom.

"Pigs," replied Harry, with an unmoved countenance.

No sooner was the word out of Harry's mouth, than up started Tom and Joe, and, crying out, "Cauld iron!" sprang forward, clutching each of them an iron bolt, with looks of the liveliest alarm.

"You've done it now," said Peter Tweedie, with a look of comical vexation, and half disguised uneasiness, though he kept his seat.

"Done what, friend?" demanded Harry.

"As if you didn't know what you had done——Why, about them pigs."

"What about the pigs?" I inquired, with an expression, I suppose, of such intense concern that my auditors (reduced to two) burst into a fit of hearty mirth.

"There's no use in being mad with you, Master Morton," said the skipper, when his laugh had subsided; "but whatever made you talk about pigs?"

"Why, how could I tell my story without?" demanded Harry. "You must know," continued he, turning to me, that our north country sailors have a mortal aversion to hearing anything about pigs when at sea."

"Or on land either," added Peter Tweedie, who seemed to have risen a notch or two above the common superstition, or else he went on upon the principle of "In for a penny, in for a pound;" for he continued, "Did you ever hear what happened in one of our north-country churches?"

"No; what was it?" asked Harry.

"Why, there was a pretty good sprinkling of fishermen and their wives at church one Sunday, and the clergyman happened to be reading about the herd of swine. At each repetition of the hateful word, a murmur of 'cauld iron' was distinctly audible from the congregation, accompanied by increased restlessness, until at last, when he read how the whole herd ran violently down a steep bank into the sea, most of the congregation could stand it no longer, but rose and went out."

"A pretty tough yarn that, friend Tweedie," said Harry.

"True, though," said the skipper; "and now, let's ha' done wi' pigs."\*

#### UNHAPPY POLAND.

So early as 1658, more than a hundred years before the actual partition of Poland, a scheme for the division of its territories was discussed by the Courts of Sweden, Austria, and Prussia, and, but for the interference of France, would probably then have been carried into effect.

\* We give this incident only as illustrating the superstitions still remaining among many classes of the people. It is considered extremely unlucky to mention the word "pigs" at sea, and many fishermen would have insisted on our immediately returning to shore. As a charm against the bad luck, or to turn it, the "sovereignest specific" is to touch "cauld iron" at the instant the word is pronounced.

For this interesting fact we are indebted to the researches of M. Rulhière (author of the "Anarchy of Poland"), among the archives of the French Foreign Office. The inquiry at once occurs—why a country so renowned, so abundant in material resources, and inhabited by a people of such warlike bravery, should have been thus singled out, and, as by the common consent of the surrounding Powers, doomed to spoliation? The reason is not far to seek. It lay in the nature of its constitution—the most faulty that could be conceived. To the evils of an elective monarchy—productive at once of civil discord and foreign interference—were added those which spring from the privilege of the veto, by which a single dissident could dissolve the Diet and negative its acts, and from the fatal right allowed dissentients, of confederating to obtain their object by force. A political system so grievously defective and vicious, and which, by vesting the whole legislative power in a turbulent Diet, composed of delegates, and denuding the king of all but the barest shadow of executive authority, could result only in internal distractions, anarchy, and inevitable decadence. In spite, therefore, of the gifts which nature had awarded to Poland—a fertile soil, forests, rivers, harbours, and, above all, a high-spirited and heroic people—the lapse of centuries witnessed only a gradual progress of national declension.

For a time, it is true, the great qualities and exploits of war of John Sobieski averted impending doom. The champion of Christendom, he saved the capture of the Austrian capital by the Turks, and dealt a blow to the Mussulman power, which permanently checked its advance into Europe. But even before the death of this sagacious and heroic prince, Poland was torn by contending factions, past all hope of cure. Every means had Sobieski tried, to use his own words, "to rescue the Republic from the insane tyranny of a plebeian noblesse;" and with a bitter presage of approaching calamity, which time but too surely realized, he addressed to the Senate, in these words, his gloomy forebodings of his country's fate: "Alas! what will one day be the mournful surprise of posterity to find that from the summit of glory, from the period when the Polish name filled the earth, our country has fallen into ruins, and fallen, alas! for ever. I have been able to gain for you victories; but I feel myself unable to save you from yourselves." The Poles have not forgotten the renowned and patriotic Sobieski. In Warsaw stands his statue, and in the Cathedral of Cracow, where his dust reposes, his shrine is visited with reverent tread.

After his death, which took place in 1696, the anarchy of contested elections for the crown gave an inlet to the interference of Russia. The grasp of the Muscovite on the unhappy country from that time has never relaxed. So great did the influence of Russia become, that Catherine II was able, in 1764, to raise her favourite, Count Poniatowski, to the throne of Poland, which was now, indeed, little better than a Russian dependency.

Frederick William of Prussia was meanwhile, with a lynx-eye, watching the progress of events. He had long coveted the province of Polish Prussia, which, in addition to its fertility and commercial resources—lying as it did between Eastern Prussia and Prussia proper—was required to give territorial compactness and symmetry to his dominions. Jealous of the growing influence of Catherine in the affairs of Poland, and taking advantage of its distractions, he despatched his brother Henry to the Court of the Empress, with instructions to lay before her, and gain her assent to, a plan of partition. If at first unwilling to accede, from the hope that the whole, and not part of Poland, would ultimately fall under her sway,



Catherine, threatened with interference in her war with Turkey, was shut up to the acceptance of the Prussian proposal. "Gain Austria," she said to Prince Henry, "and let her amuse France; England I will flatter, Turkey I will frighten." Austria was gained by the promise of a share in the spoil. And accordingly at St. Petersburg, in August 1772, on the part of the three Powers the partition treaty was signed. Whatever was the mode in which, by her co-operation in the scheme, Austria sought to divert the attention of France, certain it is that the ministry of Louis xv—creatures of Madame du Barry—were not the men to act with the vigour necessary to deter the confederated Powers from the accomplishment of their nefarious design. England was flattered by Catherine; for the alliance of Russia was at that time eagerly courted by British statesmen. Not to repress the aggressive career of the Northern Power, but to checkmate the ambition of France, had been their labour and was still their aim. This is evident from the rebuke administered by Earl Rochford, Secretary of State, to Mr. Murray, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, who saw danger in the partition scheme, and who had, to avert it, urged the Porte to continue the war against Russia.

A brief extract from the secretary's letter will show how inadequate and unworthy was the view taken by the British Government of the magnitude of the crisis, either as affecting the Polish people or as a wanton violation of every principle of right, justice, and international law. Thus writes Earl Rochford: "As to the extraordinary and unexpected event of a partition of Poland, by three Powers who appeared some time since very unlikely to combine together for that object, I am to inform you, that although such a change suggests not improbable apprehensions that the trade of Europe may be affected by it, neither His Majesty nor the other commercial Powers have thought it of such present importance as to make a direct opposition to it, or to enter into action (as your Excellency supposes necessary) to prevent it." There is surely some ground in the tone and spirit of this state document to justify the remark of Napoleon, that the English are a nation of shopkeepers. Whether it was the commercial spectacles through which England looked at the partition of Poland, or the flattery of the Russian alliance, it is certain that she uttered no protest, and showed no compassion, but silently allowed the commission of the colossal crime.

Lord Chatham, not then a minister, appears to have been as little revolted at the conduct of Russia; for, writing to Lord Shelburne under date 20th October, 1773, he says: "Your Lordship knows I am quite a Russ." Nor with all his political sagacity and prevision, did Edmund Burke, while reprobating the iniquity of the partition, see in it a derangement of the balance of power, and, what was afterwards made sufficiently clear, an alarming step towards Russian ascendancy in Europe.

Turkey was frightened from interference by the victories which Catherine obtained over her; and thus the time for carrying the scheme into effect was signally opportune. Accordingly, and in spite of the efforts and protests of the Polish King and Diet, the troops of the partitioning Powers took possession of the territories respectively assigned to them by the partition treaty. Russia seized Livonia and other provinces; Austria took Galicia, part of Podolia and Cracow; and Prussia, Pomerania and the country bordering on the Vistula.

When the feeble Louis xv heard of the consummated iniquity, he is reported to have said, "This would not have happened if Choiseul had been here." Unfor-

tunately the Duke de Choiseul had been superseded as minister in 1771, and no one of like vigour directed the foreign policy of France.

Guizot has termed the partition of Poland "the murder of a whole nation;" and indeed historians of every shade of opinion have in the strongest language denounced its criminality and injustice. But no condemnation can be more complete than that of Maria Theresa, the noble-minded Empress of Austria, herself a participator in the transaction. Aged, and sharing but little in the active duties of government, in which she was associated with her son, the Emperor Joseph, she, however, in a letter to Prince Kauntz, her prime minister, thus speaks of the proposed division of the Polish territory: "The public right is clearly against us, and against us also is all justice and sound reason." And when called upon to sign the draft of the partition treaty, she thus wrote on the margin: "*Placet*, because so many great and learned men will have it so; but long after I am dead and gone, people will see what will happen from having thus broken through everything that has hitherto been held holy and just." It is said also that the Emperor Francis on his deathbed expressed himself to the effect that the possession of Galicia weighed on his conscience as a crime, and that he was ready to restore the province to Poland, if Poland were not annexed to Russia. Further testimony is not needed to stamp with deserved reprobation the high-handed proceedings of the partitioning Powers. Conscience of a fatal flaw in their right to their ill-acquired possessions, they next demanded that the members of the Polish Diet should formally ratify the dismemberment of their country. By menaces, by threatening the king with deposition, by promises, and by plying the arts of corruption, the Diet was won over and its ratification obtained.

Taught by the severe logic of events, and to ward off future disaster by giving the utmost strength to what remained of Poland, King Stanislaus, with the concurrence of the Diet, established a new constitution which sought to remedy the more intolerable of existing evils. It was proclaimed at Warsaw on the 3rd of May, 1791. Speaking of this constitution, and contrasting it with the changes produced by the revolution in France, Burke says, "So far as it has gone, it is probably the most pure public good ever yet conferred on mankind." Its main provisions were the abrogation of the veto, the gradual abolition of serfdom, and the substitution of hereditary for elective sovereignty. These reforms, striking as they did at the power and privileges of the military aristocracy, raised up a host of opponents. The malcontents confederated, and appealed to Russia. Catherine, whose further designs upon Poland led her to desire the prevalence of anarchy, poured troops into the country, overawed the king and Diet, and compelled them to set aside the new constitution. In this the astute queen-monarch acted faithfully on the directions contained in the will of Peter the Great, and which are thus expressed: "Poland is to be divided. This object will be effected by encouraging in that country party rivalries, and by constantly keeping up a state of internal discord. Every opportunity is to be eagerly laid hold of which affords a pretext to march troops into Poland." Catherine had no pretext whatever for marching sixty thousand men into the unhappy country, save the umbrage which the constitutional reforms gave to her. But while these had been abrogated under compulsion, the Polish king was not quite disposed tamely to submit to such oppressive dictation. He prepared to resist the Russians by force. A number of

encounters ensued, followed by a general engagement, in which the Poles were defeated. The king counselled submission, and the Council of Deputies acquiesced. Thus ended the war directed by the king. The old constitution was formally restored, and a fresh seizure of territory made by the Russian Empress and the Prussian monarch. To this, the second partition, which took place in 1793, the Diet gave also an enforced sanction. In it Austria had no share. Four thousand square miles of territory was now all that remained of Poland, which, on the one hand, had extended from the Baltic to the Black Sea, and on the other, from Smolensko to Prague. Stung to the quick by a sense of the national degradation, the Poles of their own accord took up arms. Led by the brave Kosciusko, they compelled the invaders to evacuate Cracow. There they proclaimed the constitution of 1791. Encouraged by successes, the citizens of Warsaw rose, and after a resistance which lasted thirty-six hours, drove out the Russians. Kosciusko now fell back on the capital, where he was besieged for three months by the forces of the king of Prussia.



POLAND AT ITS GREATEST POWER.

After sustaining a loss of many thousand men, the Prussians were compelled to withdraw. Left thus free, the Polish leader marched against the converging armies of Russia. Disappointed in the reinforcements on which he had calculated, and unable to make a safe retreat, nothing remained but to risk a battle with the disciplined forces of the enemy. Though a glorious defence was made by the Poles on the right and centre, a furious charge of Russian cavalry on their unsupported left, threw them into irretrievable confusion. Kosciusko, covered with wounds, was taken prisoner. The fate of Poland was now virtually sealed. The contest henceforth was a hopeless one between heroic bravery and overpowering numbers. The remorseless Suwarroff pressed on to Warsaw. The assault on the fortified suburb of Praga, by seven columns of Russians, was met by all the energy which valour combined with desperation could impart. Bereft of their leader, inferior in numbers, and distracted by disunion, the utmost efforts of the Poles proved fruitless to avert their inevitable doom.

"In vain, alas! in vain, ye gallant few,  
From rank to rank your volley'd thunder flew

Oh! bloodiest picture in the book of Time,  
Sarmatia fell, unwept, without a crime;  
Found not a generous friend, a pitying foe,  
Strength in her arms, nor mercy in her woe;  
Dropp'd her nerveless grasp the shatter'd spear,  
Closed her bright eye, and curb'd her high career.  
Hope, for a season, bade the world farewell,  
And Freedom shriek'd as Kosciusko fell."



POLAND UNDER NAPOLEON I. (GRAND DUCHY OF WARSAW.)

The victorious Suwarroff entered Warsaw. Nine thousand Poles perished in the battle, and twenty thousand more were butchered in cold blood. The aged Polish king was carried to Russia, where in captivity a few years afterwards he died. A third partition made an end of the hapless country. Austria obtained Cracow and the country between the Pilitza and the Vistula. Prussia got Warsaw and territory to the Neiman. What remained, the largest share, was assigned to Russia. The prediction of John Sobieski is verified. Poland has fallen; but not without a crime did she thus fall.



POLAND AS NOW PARTITIONED.





*Kosciuszko*

THADDEUS KOSCIUSKO.  
(From an original portrait by Napoléon Płoszczyński).

Against herself she had sinned; not the machinations of foreign foes, or the cupidity of the Muscovite, but "aristocratic democracy" in her own bosom, unprincipled and rampant, accomplished her ruin.

Poland fallen, her brave people stripped of their nationality, hope for the future was all that remained. Thousands of the more warlike Poles joined the armies of France, and under the gallant Dombrowski fought throughout the brilliant campaigns of Bonaparte in Italy. In 1801, the Polish legions amounted to fifteen thousand men, and by their valour contributed not a little to the victorious career which attended the French arms. Dombrowski himself, in his "History of the Polish Legions," has related their exploits. Sustained by faith that their services in the cause of freedom, as they deemed it, would lead to the restoration of their national existence, the Poles continued to adhere to the standards of Napoleon. Years passed, and these services did not meet with their expected reward. In 1806, however, the French Emperor, in pursuit of the Prussians, advanced into Poland. Deferred hope became exultant in patriotic bosoms. Hailed as a liberator, Napoleon had everywhere a triumphant welcome. In Posen and Warsaw he was received with enthusiasm; multitudes of Polish recruits swelled the ranks of his army. The special distinction acquired by Dombrowski and his comrades on the field of Friedland, not to speak of other services, well entitled the cause of Poland to the faithful support of Napoleon, in his celebrated conference with the Czar Alexander on the Nieman. The issue of the conference was the treaty of Tilsit; but the result of that treaty, as concerned the Poles, came far short of their sanguine expectations. A small portion only of the Polish territory, under the title of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, in union with Saxony, was restored to independence. Disappointed, though still trusting, the Poles continued attached to Napoleon. In 1809 they rendered him inestimable aid by re-conquering from Austria the provinces she had seized; but of these, a small part only was annexed to the Grand Duchy. At length, disheartened and alienated, the brave people began to perceive that the French Emperor had no serious intention of restoring Poland, and was only using the valour of her sons for the attainment of his own selfish purposes.

Whatever the fresh hopes which the invasion of Russia in 1812 inspired, they were destined to be quenched by the result of the audience which Napoleon gave at his head-quarters to the Polish deputation from Warsaw. "Say, Sire," urged the Poles, "that the kingdom of Poland exists, and this decree will to all the world be equivalent to reality." The reply of the Emperor was to the effect that he loved the Polish nation, and would have saved it had he reigned in the time of the partitions; yet he had many interests to consult, and many duties to fulfil, and that he had "guaranteed the Emperor of Austria in the possession of his dominions." Napoleon was understood. No rising of the Poles assisted him in his arduous and fatal enterprise; and when two years had passed away, the great general, who might have liberated a nation, was himself a captive in Elba.

To the assemblage of crowned heads and their representatives at Vienna, we now turn. Diplomacy is to decide the fate of Poland. The Congress met on the 25th September, 1814. Once more an emperor claims to be the friend of the Polish people. Zealous to do what Napoleon had not courage or power to accomplish, the scheme of Alexander I was to restore Poland as it was in 1772, before the first partition. An essential part of that scheme, however, was, that over this resuscitated and entire Poland, himself and his successors on the

throne of Russia were to be the rulers. The loss to Prussia, Alexander proposed to make up by giving her Saxony; while Austria, for lack of Galicia, was to be compensated by territories in Italy. The project wore an air of extreme magnificence and liberality; but to the western diplomatists it seemed only another mode of adding entire Poland to the Russian empire, of destroying the equilibrium of power in Europe, and of bringing the Muscovite legions into the very heart of Germany. It was the aggressive career of Russia which the representatives of France and England were above all things anxious to arrest. No means did the northern autocrat leave untried to gain the object on which his heart was set. The art of personal suasion, in which he was an adept, he plied to the utmost. Menaces were not wanting, with eloquent arguments and appeals to the value of his services in the overthrow of Napoleon. In an interview sought by Alexander with the British plenipotentiary, Lord Castlereagh, he represented the partition of Poland as an offence in his eyes, which he deemed it at once honourable and politic to repair. The restored kingdom he would endow with liberal institutions, and thus achieve a work which would be the glory of Europe and of the Congress of Vienna. "I propose to myself," he emphatically said, "that noble object. I am on the eve of accomplishing it, and I will not be diverted from it." Lord Castlereagh was most desirous for the restoration of Poland, but insisted that it should be entirely independent, with a king either Polish, or in no way connected with the partitioning Powers. The interview thus proved abortive; nor did Alexander find Talleyrand, on the part of France, more yielding. Ultimately, the Czar was compelled to abate his demands, and to content himself with the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, which by the first article of the Vienna treaty was erected into the kingdom of Poland, attached by its constitution to the Russian Empire. It was to enjoy a distinct administration, and to have such extension as Alexander should judge proper: thus pointing to the future annexation of the Russian provinces of Poland, not included in the kingdom. In the same first article it is expressly stipulated that the "Poles who are respective subjects of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, shall obtain a representation, and national institutions regulated according to the degree of political existence that each of the governments to which they belong shall judge expedient and proper to grant them."

While the independence of Poland was not secured by the treaty of Vienna, it was the undoubted intention of the Congress, as if by way of compensation, to preserve the nationality of the Polish people. If on this point the language of the fourteen articles which relate to Poland needed corroboration, it is found in the terms of the proclamation of Alexander I, on granting to the Poles a constitution in accordance with the requirements of the treaty. The proclamation was issued on the 13th of May, 1815, and thus declares the mind of the Emperor to the Polish subjects of his new kingdom: "A constitution appropriated to your wants and your character: the preservation, in public enactments, of your language—the restriction of public appointments to Poles—freedom of commerce and navigation—facility of communication with those parts of ancient Poland which are subject to other Powers—a national army—a guarantee that every means will be taken to perfect your laws—the free circulation of enlightenment in your country—such are the advantages you will enjoy under our rule and that of our successors, and which you will transmit as a patriotic legacy to your descendants."

Three years later, Alexander, as constitutional king of

Poland, on opening the first Polish Diet said, "I have created this kingdom, and I have established it on a very solid basis, for I have forced the European Powers to guarantee its existence by treaties." And again, "Your restoration is defined by solemn treaties: it is sanctioned by the Constitutional Chart." The Constitutional Chart, while it established the Roman Catholic religion, gave also entire toleration and equality of civil rights. It guaranteed personal liberty and the freedom of the press. In a senate, a house of representatives, and the king, was vested the legislative power. These estates, united, formed the Diet, which was to meet every two years. The executive power rested with the king, or the Council of State, composed of functionaries appointed by him. The initiative in legislation, however, belonged to the king or council, not to the chambers. Each of the five great departments of state—Instruction, Justice, Interior and Police, War and Finance—had a responsible head. The ministers were subject to the president of the council. The viceroy, if not a member of the royal family, was to be a Pole. The Poles reciprocated the confidence placed in them. The Grand Duke Constantine was returned a deputy for the faubourg of Praga, by a majority of one hundred and three to six votes. At the end of the first session of the Diet, the king expressed his satisfaction with the conduct of the representatives and with the result of their labours. Nor can it be denied that Alexander was perfectly sincere in his liberal professions, and was most desirous to play the part of a constitutional monarch. Kosciuszko, who was released from prison on the accession of the Emperor Paul, and who, in his voluntary exile, had all along mistrusted Napoleon, applauded the efforts, and expressed his admiration of the conduct of Alexander.

But while, for a season, all seemed fair and promising, the testing time was approaching. The constitution, excellent as it was, was not independence. The Poles having got so much, wished for more. Secret societies sprung up with political aims. The discovery of their existence and character called forth a spirit of repression on the part of the government. No Pole could obtain civil or military employment unless he took an oath that he did not belong to a secret society. Distrust gave birth to suspicion. The liberty of the press was interfered with, and on other points also was the constitution violated. The activity of a secret police produced arbitrary arrests—imprisonments—banishments; and, to crown all, Constantine, as Viceroy, was capricious, violent, and brutal.

The issue of this state of matters was the insurrection of 1830. Stimulated, doubtless, by the revolution which occurred in France in the same year, it broke out on the 29th of November. The Viceroy Constantine narrowly escaped with his life, and Warsaw fell into the hands of the insurgents. A provisional government was formed, which numbered among its members General Chlopicki and Prince Adam Czartoryski; the former assumed the dictatorship until the Diet should meet. When the Diet assembled, Chlopicki accordingly resigned, but was re-appointed. The constitution of 1815, and the incorporation of Lithuania, Volhynia, and Podolia, with the kingdom of Poland, as promised by the Vienna treaty, was demanded by the insurgent Poles. The deputation sent to Nicholas to make these demands, in proper form, were met only by reproaches. That stern autocrat and bitter hater of constitutionalism would not even listen to their complaints, and dismissed them contemptuously, with the threat that "the first cannon-shot fired would be the signal for the ruin of Poland." To this menace the Polish Diet replied by issuing a mani-

festo, enumerating the wrongs and sufferings which Russia had inflicted upon the unhappy country, and by decreeing the formal deposition of Nicholas and his family from the throne of the kingdom. Thus the Poles threw away the scabbard, and defiantly confronted the power of their oppressor. The contest was of nine months' duration. The vast superiority of the Russians, in numbers and warlike equipments, was in some measure counterbalanced by the determined bravery of the Poles, and by the superior generalship of their leaders. Without alliance or external support, and with not more than eighty thousand men at any time, and these ill-supplied with arms and munitions, they encountered the Russian forces in not less than six pitched battles, and above thirty combats. The drawn battle of Grochow, fought on the 19th of February, was followed by the desperate and bloody struggle of Praga, after which the Poles retreated to Warsaw. Commanded by Skrzynecki, the ablest and most resourceful of the Polish generals, fresh efforts were made, and new intrenchments thrown around the capital. At these, both men and women worked with patriotic enthusiasm. The plan of the Polish leader was by sudden irruptions from his central position to fall upon the scattered Russian forces. The result was a career varied by success and reverse. In the terrible battle of Ostrolenka, the repulse of the Poles was signal, and compelled their retreat to Praga. On the 18th of June they were again defeated at Wilna. After the death of Diebitch the Russians were commanded by Paskiewitch, who now advanced to the assault of Warsaw. It fell on the 7th of September. The struggle was at an end. Nicholas was triumphant; nor was his triumph tempered by moderation. The highest of the land were seized and banished to Siberia, and an oath forced on the soldiers, under threat of death, while young men were torn from noble families, and doomed to service in distant colonies as common soldiers. Bitterest indignity of all, the restored national existence of the Poles was rudely extinguished, and the so called kingdom of Poland annexed to Russia as a province of the empire. In 1846 a similar fate overtook the little republic of Cracow, which was absorbed by Austria; and thus, in spite of diplomatic remonstrances, the provisions of the Treaty of Vienna were flagrantly violated; while the three partitioning Powers have also made every effort to suppress the institutions and to denationalize the Polish people.

The plea urged by Russia, in justification of her conduct to Poland is, that by the insurrection of 1830 the Poles forfeited their right to the constitution of 1815, and thus relieved the Czar from the engagements of the Vienna treaty. This view is ably refuted in Lord Palmerston's despatch, of date 23rd November, 1831, to Lord Heytesbury, then Ambassador at St. Petersburg. Russia has no power, argues his Lordship, to abrogate the constitution granted to the Poles, because it is the link which, under the treaty, binds the kingdom of Poland to the empire. The constitution reserved to the sovereign no right to change or modify it, but carefully guards against such an exercise of the executive authority. "It declares (Article 31) that the Polish nation shall ever possess a national representation, consisting of a Diet, composed of a king and two chambers; it declares (Article 163) that the organic statutes and the codes of laws cannot be modified or changed, except by the king and two chambers; it requires (Article 45) that every king of Poland shall swear before God upon the Scriptures, to maintain the constitution, and cause it to be executed to the best of his power; and the Emperor Alexander, on the 27th November, 1815, formally gave



this constitution, and declared that he adopted it for himself and for his successors."

As a deliverance from the present troubled and insurrectionary state of Poland, Earl Russell, holding by the Treaty of Vienna, has urged upon Russia the re-establishment of the constitution of 1815; and more recently England and France, backed to a certain extent by Austria, have joined in a note embracing the following recommendations, viz.:—Cessation of hostilities; a general amnesty; a national representation on the principle of that granted by Alexander I; public offices in Poland to be filled by Poles alone; the use of Polish as the official language, and liberty of conscience in all public transactions and in the education of the people; and, lastly, the establishment of a regular system of recruiting. Whatever may be the result of diplomatic interference, every one must feel that the wisest course for Russia is to adopt a policy of justice and generosity towards her Polish subjects. Events should by this time have convinced her that the brave people on whom her heavy hand lies, whatever may have been their faults and errors, are not to be coerced into submission to despotic rule, and that their national life is a vital force which no amount of severity will suffice to extinguish.

The indelible nationality and yearning of the Poles for the restoration of their country, find a full and touching expression in the "Polish Hymn," of which the following is a literal translation:—

I.  
"O Lord, who, for so many centuries, didst surround  
Poland with the magnificence of power and glory;  
Who didst cover her with the shield of Thy protection  
When our armies overcame the enemy; at Thy  
Altar we raise our prayer: deign to restore us, O Lord,  
Our free country!

II.  
"O Lord, who hast been touched by the woes of our injured  
Land, and hast guided the martyrs of our sacred cause;  
Who hast granted to us, among many other nations,  
The standard of courage, of unblemished honour; at  
Thy altar we raise our prayer: deign to restore us,  
O Lord, our free country!

III.  
"Thou whose eternally-just hand crushes the empty pride  
Of the powerful of the earth; in spite of the enemy  
Vilely murdering and oppressing, breathe hope into  
Every Polish breast! At Thy altar we raise our  
Prayer; deign to restore us, O Lord, our free country!

IV.  
"May the cross which has been insulted in the hands  
Of Thy ministers give us constant strength under our  
Sufferings! May it inspire us in the day of battle  
With faith that above us soars the spirit of  
The Redeemer! At Thy altar we raise our prayer;  
Deign to restore us, O Lord, our free country.

V.  
"In the name of His Commandments, we all unite  
As brothers. Hasten, O Lord, the moment of resurrection!  
Bless with liberty those who now mourn in slavery! At  
Thy altar we raise our prayer; deign to restore us,  
O Lord, our free country!

VI.  
"Give back to our Poland her ancient splendour! Look  
Upon our fields soaked with blood! When shall  
Peace and happiness blossom among us? God  
Of wrath, cease to punish us! At Thy altar we raise  
Our prayer: deign to restore us, O Lord, our free country."\*

#### "OF COURSE."

It is curious to observe how frequently certain words or phrases are employed in a sense widely differing from

that which, in their plain and natural acceptation, they might be supposed to convey. I do not here allude to those ironical forms of expression which are avowedly intended to be understood according to what is called in logic "the rule of contraries," but to those which in practice do constantly neutralize their own plain and obvious meaning, and convey, by a subtle form of innuendo, one which is altogether opposed to it.

That which I have selected as an illustration, is one of those phrases to which this observation may with much justice be applied. It assumes, chameleon-like, the colour of the medium through which it passes, and may be, as it were, tinted with all the hues of the rainbow. It runs glibly off the tongue, and acts usefully at times as a cement to join together sentences or sentiments, or as a lubricant to soften the friction and jar of conversation. Sometimes it is the very portion of a speech or letter which sends a thrill of joy to the heart; or it may be only the chilling damper, which takes away all the grace of a compliment, or the unction of a kindly expression. Let me give an example or two, in explanation.

One morning I received a letter from an old friend and schoolfellow, informing me of his approaching marriage with the lovely daughter of a neighbouring squire, and that the old hall is about to resound with the usual and appropriate festivities. There is a cordial invitation to myself; but the real charm of it, in my eyes, is contained chiefly in the terms employed—"Of course, dear old fellow, you will be there, and stand by me on this trying but happy occasion." I cannot but feel that there is more real kindness, more cordial recognition of our ancient alliance, in those two little words, than could have been contained in whole pages of flattering and studied compliment. I must also fear that there was a different sort of meaning in the "of course" which sanctioned the presence, on that joyous occasion, of some guests who may have been considered acquisitions of rather doubtful value. "I suppose we *must* invite the Smiths:" "Oh yes, of *course* we must!" and the Smiths are invited accordingly.

Young Velox is just now engaged in pursuits that cause terrible annoyance to his "paternal relation," whom, nevertheless, he wishes to be thought to hold in all due honour and affection. He has been known to express himself somewhat in this way, when remonstrated with on the subject—

"Why, really, I don't think that it is at all fair! I suppose the governor amused *himself* when he was young; and he ought not to complain of me if I am a little fast now; but, as to love and affection, and all that sort of thing, why, that's all right, you know; of *course* it is."

Thus it is in too many instances. The tie which binds relatives together is not so much that of a pure and unselfish love, as the effect of routine, and a conventional deference to established order. I should be sorry to rest my happiness upon an affection which I could trace back to no better and more elevated origin than an "of course." It is, I think, very wrong in friends or visitors to catechise children as to "whether they love papa and mamma;" but, when it is done, I should prefer hearing a simple answer to the question, without the interpolation, "Of *course* I do!" This way of taking for granted, and expecting that others should take for granted, that these things are *necessarily* "all right," as Velox hath it, does, I fear, often imply, under the semblance of affirmation, a vast amount of real and substantive renunciation, and practical denial of the truth thus so confidently asserted.

\* From "The Polish Captivity," by Sutherland Edwards.

I know a man who, loving what is called "general information," has dabbled a little in medical science, and sometimes ventures to argue a point with the village Hippocrates; always, however, yielding the ground to his professional opponent, with the observation, "Of course, doctor, you know best:" which really means, "You think you know all about it better than I do, because you are an M.D.; but you are grievously mistaken." I know not whether the doctor feels the point of this Parthian dart; but I think I should do so were I in his place.

I was much amused, some time since, by an instance of the sort of *affirmative negative* of which I have been speaking.

Two of my country neighbours had a dispute about the price of a cow which did not "keep her engagements." I ventured to propose an arbitration, or reference to a third party, and named a man whom I considered every way fit to act as umpire on the occasion. The ready assent of one party, and the obvious reluctance of the other, however, tended to raise a doubt on this point; it was at least evident that favouritism was expected, on both sides. I could not help taking the recusant to task, and asking him whether he had any objection to bring forward. "Was not Farmer Brown an honest man?" To this he replied, that Brown "*was* an honest man; *of course* he's an honest man." Now, the affirmation here in reality contradicts itself, and yet no offence was given; for no one has a right to complain because the honesty and integrity of himself or his friends are assumed as matters of course.

The phrase before us is often used, so to speak, snub-bishly; that is, for the purpose of snubbing one's neighbour without either contradicting or calling him a fool. Thus, if an unhappy individual should observe that such a one died in the reign of George III, he may be met with the remark, "*Of course* he did;" as much as to say, "Do you think no one knew that but yourself?"

It is sometimes a little troublesome to have too much taken for granted as to our information and accomplishments. Paterfamilias is often annoyed in this way; for the children will come running, even before company, to have some point explained, or some term defined; for "*of course* papa knows all about it." In such cases, much depends on the tact and presence of mind of the party engaged. "Silurian system, my boy? oh yes; but you are really getting too learned. Come, we must not talk about school matters before company." "Coleopterous? yes: a fact in natural history, a little beyond your age; but it will all come in due time." Such are some of the unparliamentary modes of "cushioning" disagreeable questions.

This reminds me that the assumptions connected with our "collective wisdom" are somewhat curious. A man with whom I have but a slight personal acquaintance, and, it may be, much personal and political enmity, is "my honourable friend" if I have occasion to allude to him in debate; and this, although I have strong reason to think that he owes his seat to the vilest malpractices. In any case, he is the "honourable member," while every soldier or sailor is "gallant," every lawyer "learned," and so on—all matters of course.

When to all this we add the effect of tone and manner, in which the whole stress of the matter often lies, we shall not be surprised at finding that this much-used expression so seldom conveys what would seem to be its plain and obvious meaning. It can, as we have seen, neutralize a compliment, throw a doubt over natural affections or superior abilities, and call in question the very truth which it pretends to assert and confirm.

It is consequently a dangerous and insidious form of speech, unless used in perfect simplicity and sincerity of purpose. I would therefore advise my readers—my young readers especially—to be cautious in its employment, and never on any account to have recourse to it for the purposes of evasion or innuendo. It is a social meanness and a moral delinquency to shrink from the avowal of our real sentiments, and to take shelter, instead, under cover of a shirking and disingenuous "of course," to mask by its means a real difference, while yielding a seeming assent, or give vent to a deprecatory sentiment while uttering apparently the language of respect, if not of adulation.

Reader! do you ever indulge in such unworthy practices as these? Of course you do not; and I, as your friendly monitor, am, of course, very happy to think so.

### THE SERVICE OF SATIRE.

LIKE sharpshooters thrown out in advance of a main army, so have ever been the light corps of satirists which precede and accompany the progress of any of the great truths among men. Particularly was the power of such guerilla warfare recognised in the march of that mighty religious movement which modern historians with one accord designate the Reformation.

The popular mind loves fun, and loves ridicule. There were a great many matters in connection with the Romish church, calculated to awaken both the sensation and the sentiment; and those men who were clever enough to give voice to the pervading feeling, were certain of being heard with applause. Sir David Lindsay, Lyon-herald of Scotland, was one such—of whom it has even been stated that he was "more the reformer of Scotland than John Knox; for he had prepared the ground, and John only sowed the seed." Satiric poems were the instrumentality of the former, clearing the way for the heavy artillery of the preaching of the latter. "For the more particular means," writes Row, in his "History of the Kirk," "the means whereby many in Scotland got some knowledge of God's truth in the time of darkness: there were some books, such as Sir David Lindsay's poesie upon the Four Monarchies, wherein other treatises are contained, opening up the abuses among the clergy at that time." And we read further that this writer's "Pleasant Satire of the Three Estates, in commendation of Virtue, and vituperation of Vice," "was acted in the amphitheatre of Perth, before King James v, and a great part of the nobility and gentry, from morn till even, which made the people sensible of the darkness wherein they lay, of the wickedness of the churchmen, and did let them see how God's church should have been otherways guided than it was; all which did much good for that time." We have at least one instance where a single copy of this redoubtable poet's Satire produced a popular commotion; for a lad in the school of Andrew Simson was accustomed to read it to his class-mates, which so imbued them with a love of the truth, and a hatred of the false pretensions of Rome, that they drove away a preaching friar who attempted to impose miracles upon them, and in fact originated a reforming movement in their town of Perth.

But long before Sir David Lindsay's time, the troubadours of southern Europe had been pointing the polished shafts of their poetry at the weak places of the church. The contrast between what the priests professed and what they practised was a favourite theme. "There are no crimes for which pardons may not be bought from the monks," says one; "for money they

grant to renegades and usurers that sepulture which they deny to the poor who have nothing to pay. Their great object during the whole year is to live at ease, to buy good fish, fine wheaten bread, and exquisite wines. God grant me to be a monk, if salvation is to be purchased at this price! St. Peter and St. Andrew were great fools to submit to torments for the sake of a Paradise which costs others so little."

One of the most eminent of these pre-reformation satirists was Boccaccio, the author of "The Decameron." His clever but sometimes gross book of stories is full of the most pungent sarcasm at the expense of the religious orders which then swarmed throughout Christendom. Their arrogant pretensions, their evil lives, their absurd superstitions, are placed in the most forcible light. Relic-worship comes in for its share of ridicule. As Samuel Rogers writes in his "Italy," concerning "the wondrous catalogue" poured in Boccaccio's ear by a friar who little knew what grievous harm he was doing his church by the inventory:—

"A ray, imprimis, of the star that shone  
To the Wise Men: a vial full of sounds,  
The musical chimes of the great bell that hung  
In Solomon's temple: and though last, not least,  
A feather from the angel Gabriel's wing,  
Dropt in the Virgin's chamber!"

No wonder that the satirist found irresistible such a theme as this. He filled the Florentine lectureship on Dante's "Divina Commedia," wherein he must have found much congenial matter for further sarcasms upon Rome.

With our own eyes we may yet behold, in the artefacts of those ages, traces of the spirit of satire. From how many corbels and gargoyles in ruined monasteries, do sensual inflated faces of cowed monks and tansured priests look down upon us! I remember some singular instances at Melrose. The illuminations of missals and other manuscripts executed in convent scriptoriums, bear such devices as a fox dressed in monk's frock preaching to a pack of geese with gaping bills. During one season of the year, the Easter Revels, as it was called—an ancient foreshadowing of Carnival—full licence for ridicule of the church's ordinances seems to have been allowed. D'Aubigné says, "The preachers studied in their sermons everything that might raise a laugh among their hearers. One imitated the note of the cuckoo: another hissed like a goose. One dragged to the altar a layman dressed in a friar's frock; another recounted various tricks attributed to St. Peter himself, and told absurd stories. The lower clergy took advantage of the opportunity to ridicule their superiors: the churches were converted into a mere stage for mountebanks, and the priests into buffoons."

Everybody has heard of the Lord of Misrule, or Abbot of Unreason, who was ringleader in such popular orgies. "While the hierarchy flourished in full glory," says Sir Walter Scott, "they do not appear to have dreaded the consequences of suffering the people to become so irreverently familiar with things sacred. They imagined the laity to be much in the condition of a labourer's horse, which does not submit to the whip or bridle with greater reluctance, because at rare intervals he is allowed to frolic at large in his pasture, and fling out his heels in clumsy gambols at the master who usually drives him. But when times changed, when doubt of the Roman Catholic doctrine, and hatred of her priesthood, possessed the reformed party, the clergy discovered too late that no small inconvenience arose from the established practice of games and merry-makings, in which themselves, and all they held most sacred, were made subject of ridicule."

Worse personal results than ridicule sometimes fol-

lowed the saturnalia held by the popular abbot aforesaid. Once, when a priest was sent from the Primate of St. Andrews to the Lord of Borthwick with letters of excommunication, he was seized by the retinue of the Abbot of Misrule, and ducked in a mill-dam, after which his parchments were steeped in wine, which he was compelled to drink, and finish all by eating the letters of excommunication thus soaked—a piece of grim humour amply relished by those concerned, excepting the principal actor.

England had jesting seasons of the same description. Very early in the dawn of her literature had "The Vision of Piers Plowman" led the van in attack on the frivolities of the dominant church. A certain William Langland went to wander one day on "Malverne hilles," "in a somer seson, when softe was the sun;"

"And as I lay and lened,  
And looked on the watres,  
I slombred into a slepyng."

During which "slepyng" came to him the renowned Vision. He beheld

"Pilgrims and palmers going forth together,  
For to seeken Saint Jame and saintes of Rome:  
They wenton forth on their way with many wise tales,  
And then had leave to *lie*, all their life after."

Neither did Chaucer spare the church. His "Canterbury Pilgrimage" contains keen strokes of satire against existing superstitions and ecclesiastic vices. When the weak twilight of Wickliff's times had passed into the strong daylight of the English Reformation, we still find popular satirists doing their work. The "Merrie Ballades" of Gray, a lyrical under Henry VIII, were enthusiastically received by the commonalty, and contain such verses as these:—

"Ane cursed fox lay hid in rocks  
This long and many a day;  
Devouring sheep while he might creep;  
None might him scare away.  
It did him good to lap the blood  
Of young and tender lambe:  
None could him misse: for all were his,  
The young ones with their dams.  
The hunter is Christ, that hunts in haste,  
The hounds are Peter and Paul:  
The Pope is the fox; Rome is the rocks,  
That rubs us on the gall.  
That cruel beast he never ceased  
By his usurped power,  
Under dispence, to get our pence,  
Our soules to devour."

Further, the poet speaks disparagingly of such "remission of sins in old sheepskins," and generally treats papal pretensions with a justifiable scorn. Who shall doubt but such vivid "ballades" as these have helped to make England protestant to the core?

Another unknown minstrel puts into the Pope's mouth this suggestive language:—

"As for Scripture, I am above it:  
Am I not God's high vicar?  
Should I be bound to follow it,  
As the carpenter his ruler?  
Nay, nay, heretics ye are,  
That will not obey my authoritie;  
With this *avord* will I declare,  
That ye shall all accursed be."

And this is no caricature of the papal rescripts of the period.

We have not spoken of Erasmus, one of the greatest masters of the art of stinging satire that ever wielded pen. He it is who wrote "The Praises of Folly," embodying that attribute in the person of Moria, daughter of Plutus, and queen of a mighty empire; which empire comprehends great numbers of theologians and monks. Some of her speeches may be quoted. "All those are



mine," she says, "who have no greater joy than to relate miracles and listen to monstrous lies, using them to fill their own purses: I speak especially of the priests and preachers. Near by them are to be found those persons who fixed in their minds the foolish but consolatory persuasion, that if they cast a look on a piece of wood or a picture representing Christopher, or Polyphemus, they shall not die that day. These follies almost make me blush," continues Folly herself. "Do we not see that every trouble has its saint, and every saint has his candle? This saint cures your toothache, another gets back your stolen property, another saves you in shipwreck, another guards your flocks. The mind of man is so made, that imposture has much more hold on it than truth. If there be one saint more fabulous than another, him will you see adored with much superior devotion to St. Peter or Paul, nay, even to Christ himself."

Hans Holbein adorned this book with whimsical engravings, in which even the Pope and his triple crown figure frequently. "It is impossible to describe the impression which this work produced throughout Christendom: twenty-seven editions of it appeared during the lifetime of Erasmus."

Another satirical publication, which had a large share in promoting the Reformation throughout Germany, was Ulrich von Hütten's "Letters of some Obscure Men." The plan of the book is, that certain monks write letters to a professor in a university, in their own barbarous Latin, and conveying the most absurd questions and remarks. "They give the most childishly simple proofs of their gross ignorance, their unbelief, their superstition, their low vulgarity, and at the same time of their haughty spirit and persecuting zeal. The perusal is highly diverting, from the medley of hypocrisy and absurdity exhibited; while the whole appears so natural, that the Dominicans and Franciscans of England received the work with much approbation, and thought it had actually been composed in defence of the orders! A Brabant prior purchased a great many copies, which he sent as presents to the more distinguished Dominicans." No further proof can be needed of the accuracy of the picture drawn by Von Hütten; and from the general laugh it occasioned, the monks never recovered—their popular prestige was gone.

Notwithstanding these triumphs of satire, the Christian reader is forced to agree with Luther, that it is not by such means that God would have his truth advanced by his servants. The highest style of soldier is not the man who lies in an ambush, and flings forth poisoned darts, but he who encounters the enemy in open field.

#### '98 AND ITS "TIMES."

SOME years ago, when residing at Cheltenham, we paid a visit to the source of the Thames, and watched with wonder the then threadlike character of the rivulet which we were accustomed to see at London Bridge as a broad and noble flood. With feelings somewhat similar, we have been taking up a reprint of "The Times" newspaper for 3rd October, 1798. It is difficult to believe that the insignificant sheet which professes to be the reproduction of that journal, for the period in question, has any real affinity with the thunderer of 1868. But it is so. The vast and wonderful broadsheet that we have opened at our breakfast table this morning, is a lineal descendant of the Lilliputian journal of the earlier date.

There is something strangely interesting in turning over this memorial of the past—these advertisements,

for instance. How curious to read what in language seems so fresh and recent, but which is in reality so thoroughly old and dead. Here a gentleman offers a guinea for the finding of his favourite dog, which has strayed; but his anxieties about it, we warrant, are all moderated enough now. Miss Rutter advertises the merits of her boarding-school for the rising generation, but she, and most of her pupils with her, are quiet enough ere this, and have gone where the use of the globes and carriage and deportment little concern them. Gouldsmith of Bond Street advertises his scarlet cloth, as admirably adapted for hunting-coats; but the gay Meltonians whose eyes this advertisement was intended to catch, have long since had their last burst with the hounds, and repose now where no longer the bustle of the hunting field can waken them.

We are struck, however, in glancing down these advertising columns, with their tiny appearance compared with those of the modern journal. The community had not yet apparently appreciated the newspaper as the great medium of publicity. In vain we look for the representatives of those advertisements which are now so familiar to us, in particular columns of "The Times." Here are no mysterious announcements in cyphers; no strings of vessels announced to sail for every part of the globe; no publisher with his broadsheet of new publications; no insurance offices or banks competing for public favour. A few sales by auction are announced; a few quacks parade their nostrums; and here and there a tradesman, wise before his age, advertises the excellence of his wares; but as a whole, the advertising world, in the sense we now attach to the term, can scarcely be said to have existed.

In glancing over the advertisements, one of them is of a character which clearly shows how insecure the roads of the period were for travellers. It is as follows:—

"TWO HUNDRED POUNDS REWARD.

*General Post Office.* Tuesday, July 3, 1798.

"The post boy carrying the mail from Bromley to Sevenoaks was stopped about two miles from Farnborough, between the hours of ten and eleven o'clock, by a single highwayman, who presented a horse pistol, and demanded the mail, which the boy gave him. He offered the robber half-a-guinea, but he declined taking it."

In other parts of the paper, there are no less than three paragraphs detailing highway robberies. Mr. Vernon, of the Treasury, is one of the persons thus robbed; Lieutenant Millar, of the Horse Guards, is another; and Mr. Corvorsier, a king's messenger, is the third. We have, to be sure, considering our own garotte robberies, no particular cause to triumph on account of our modern improvements in point of security; but the above facts enable us to understand an anecdote related in the memoirs of an artist of that day. He was busy taking the portrait of one of the police magistrates of the period, when the latter begged to interrupt the sitting for a little, in order to receive a visitor, whose arrival had been announced. The caller proved to be a detective, who had followed the magistrate to announce the pleasing intelligence of the death of a noted highwayman, whom he had shot. The officer, knowing his haunts, had hired a postchaise, and when the unhappy criminal, thinking he had an ordinary traveller to deal with, came near, he received the contents of the officer's pistol, instead of the expected purse.

We look, of course, in vain for that corner of the modern newspaper which is devoted to messages by the electric telegraph. That invention, so disturbing, as we

imagine, to the rest of an editor, and so suggestive of second editions, did not exist. The steam-boat and the railway locomotive themselves were then little more than germs in the minds of Fulton, Millar, and Stephenson; still, the age is alive to the benefits of swift travelling, and the following paragraph was no doubt considered to announce something marvellous in that direction.

"Among the wonders of the present day, Mrs. Siddons' late achievements at Brighton, Bath, and London, should not be forgotten. She positively performed at each of these places within the incredibly short space of ninety-six hours! !!"

Nothing amuses us more, in looking over this tiny broadsheet, than the column of small paragraphs, put in by way of enliveners, which did duty for those interesting short articles which in the present day fill up any little vacant space at the editor's disposal. The paragraphs in question contain now and then a little piece of news, with a poor attempt at wit interposed. They run as follows:—

"Mr. Pitt is not confined with the gout at Walmer; we saw him yesterday in the park, in perfect good health."

"To captivate is the great object of female dress; but the fashionables of the present day forget the old adage, 'In vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird.'"

"The citizens of London have nicely trimmed the Gallic Cock. They have cut his comb for him."

Those who have read Charles Lamb's essay on "Newspapers Thirty-five Years ago," will be reminded by the above, of his humorous description of his own drudgery in having to rise every morning and prepare his quota of short paragraphs for the daily press. "In those days," he says, "every morning paper, as an essential retainer to its establishment, kept an author, who was bound to furnish daily a *quantum* of witty paragraphs. Sixpence a joke—and it was thought pretty high, too—was Dan Stuart's settled remuneration in these cases. The chat of the day, scandal, but above all, *dress*, furnished the material. The length of no paragraph was to exceed seven lines. Shorter they might be, but they must be piquant." The paragraphs we have quoted are evidently of the above class.

When we turn to the courts of law, their proceedings are reported with comparative fullness. Names well known to posterity here appear. Lord Kenyon, all unconscious of the amusing portrait of him which Lord Campbell was to draw, is seated on the bench, and his favourite Erskine, as well as Mr. Law—we presume the future Lord Ellenborough—pleads before him. The cases reported have, however, no public interest. Bow Street has also its reporter; but the other police offices either did not exist or were unrepresented.

The court of George III appears to have been sojourning at Weymouth, the favourite bathing-place of that monarch. The court newsman records their visit to Dorchester, to see some sports held in their honour, and which appear to have been just the kind of thing that Farmer George would relish. What used to make him laugh loudest, it will be remembered, was Grimaldi, at the pantomime, swallowing a string of sausages, and then patting his stomach with the utterance of the single word "nice." The sports in question are carefully intimated to be only for those of a jovial, friendly, and loyal disposition, so that no jacobinically-minded radical might come near. Here is a list of some of them:—

"A cheese to be rolled down the hill. Prize, whoever stops it.

"A pound of tobacco to be grinned fer.

"A Michaelmas goose to be dived for.

"A good hat to be cudgelled for.

"A handsome hat for the boy most expert in catching a roll dipped in treacle, and suspended by a string.

"A pig. Prize, whoever catches him by the tail."

We look in vain, of course, for any traces of the labours of "our special correspondent." That amazing feat of the modern newspaper, which plants an intelligent representative in every part of the world, was then wholly unknown. We have no letters whatever in this paper—not even one complaining of a hackney coachman's overcharge.

The state of politics, however, seems to have been gloomy enough. The Three per Cents are quoted at fifty, being nearly half their present price; Lord Duncan's fleet was cruising off Yarmouth, and a rebellion was raging in Ireland. The whole intelligence from that country looks indeed like one of the reports from Poland that we read in to-day's "Times." Court martials are ordering hangings, troops are having engagements with the rebels, and revolt against constituted authority is everywhere rampant. The well-known Wolfe Tone's trial for treason is recorded in one paragraph as having been just concluded.

The great news of the day, however, was the intelligence of the Battle of the Nile, and Nelson's victory over the French fleet, which had just arrived. The nation, as might be expected, was in a fervour of jubilation on the occasion, and even the small paragraph writer, to whom we have before alluded, had pressed the occasion into his service. He earns his two sixpences by the following smart sentences:—

"Every man in this country may address Admiral Nelson, with Shakespeare—

" 'Horatio, thou art as brave a man  
As e'er my conversation coped withal.'"

"The capture of the French fleet by Nelson has reduced Buonaparte in Egypt to the situation of Macbeth—

" 'There is no going home nor tarrying here.'"

When we turn to the editorial leader—for there is but one—we find an utter absence of all those qualities which, in a similar part of the modern journal, have given the paper such a celebrity. Here we have no masterly thoughts conveyed in graceful and massive sentences, forming models of English composition of the highest order. The editor of last century gives us nothing more than a statement of the bald facts of Nelson's victory, with a few simple conjectures as to the probable effects of it upon the future of the war. It is interesting to be, as we are, in the secret, and to see how what puzzled our fathers has been made easy by Time's curtain being pulled up. We know now how Napoleon got away from the Egyptian trap; while the French Directory, against which the editor recommends the war to be briskly continued, is remembered now, as only an old body dissolved by Bonaparte's unscrupulous vigour.

This, after all, is the thing that gives such an interest to this old newspaper. To wander over its columns is like having a walk through the streets of Pompeii, where everything at first sight looks as if it were connected with a living city, but where all is death. We lay down the paper (which, little as it was, cost our fathers sixpence), with a wonder at the immense progress which modern journalism has made, and at the same time with a deepened impression of the dreamlike character of life, the fugacity of human events, and the importance of those interests which reach beyond time into eternity.